

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

Fourth Series

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 326.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1870.

PRICE 1½d.

SHERIDAN AT WORK.

I KNOW nothing in fiction wilder or more romantic than the life of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The son of an Irish actor, endowed with the most brilliant and varied gifts of nature, high spirit, a noble presence, imagination, wit, and eloquence, all those qualities that win the admiration of men and the affection of women, yet without a shilling in the world to call his own, without either of those recommendations which form the passport to the highest circles of English society—high birth and university honours—the author of the *School for Scandal* rose by the mere force of his genius, and rose almost at a bound, to the highest position in the ranks of political and social life, at a period when political and social life in England was tainted by the narrowest and most exclusive spirit that has ever distinguished the aristocracy of this country. He held that position, and held it with *éclat*, all through a long life, the rival of wits like Coleman and Horne Tooke; of orators and statesmen like Pitt, and Fox, and Burke; and of men of genius like Byron and Scott. He died almost in the arms of a sheriff's officer, and was buried, with honours all but regal, with princes of the blood for his pall-bearers, in the sepulchre of our greatest kings and statesmen. It was a brilliant but a sad career, full of startling contrasts, marked by many humiliations and many victories, by great failures and great successes; and yet now, when one asks what remains of all this genius and of all this success, it is not easy to frame an answer. A speech or two, which no one now thinks of reading, except to trace, in its most vivid colours, what he thinks the false taste of the age in eloquence and wit; the fleeting recollection of a few epigrams and *bon mots*; and two or three sparkling contributions to the literature of the drama, are all that remain to mark the genius of the man who for thirty years was

The pride of the palace, the bower, and the hall.

The recklessness with which Sheridan compromised with fame and fortune, abandoning the

honourable and distinguished position in history which was his by right of genius, for the faint and flickering reputation of a drawing-room wit, is, as far as I know, without a parallel. What Byron said of him in his epigram is quite true: ‘He has written the best comedy, the best opera, the best farce, and the best address, and, to crown all, delivered the very best oration ever conceived or heard in this country.’ And yet, with all this, no one who crossed his path, no one who knew him in the House of Commons, in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre, at the dinner-table, or at Brookes’s, thought his achievements equal to his genius. To all appearance, a mere idle man about town, thinking of nothing but the caprice and pleasure of the hour, a mere spendthrift of all his gifts, no one ever spoke of Sheridan but as

The orator, dramatist, minstrel, who ran
Through each mode of the lyre, and was master of
all,

Whose mind was an essence, compounded with wit,
From the finest and best of all other men's powers;
and I know no reason for supposing that the general impression of Sheridan and of his powers is not the correct impression; for he was put to every test that a man of genius could be put to, from the composition of *vers de société* to the preparation of state papers, from the concoction of *bon mots* to the arraignment of a great prisoner of state in Westminster Hall, as one of the spokesmen of the House of Commons; and he was equal to every test.

This impression of Sheridan's contemporaries must, however, be taken with one or two reservations. What they set down to inspiration, and to the spontaneous working of a keen and active intellect—brilliant bits of dialogue in his plays, bold and happy flights of eloquence, telling retorts and vivid epigrams—we know to have been the result in nearly every case of long hours of preparation and labour at his desk. There was more artifice about Sheridan as a writer and an orator, than about any man of equal genius. He loved to keep up an air of mystery about his genius.

You may trace this trait in him even as a boy at Harrow. His ambition then was to be distinguished as the idlest boy in the school, and the most active in the play-ground. His industry was just enough to protect him from disgrace, and that was all. Yet, when he left Harrow at eighteen, he knew enough of the classics to talk 'copiously and powerfully' about Cicero and Demosthenes with a scholar like Dr Parr, was at home in Virgil and Horace, and could read the *Iliad*, if not with the critical discernment of a scholar, at least with 'all the strong sympathies of a poet reading a poet.'

What he was at Harrow, he was in Westminster Hall. 'You know I'm an ignoramus,' he used to say to his friends when pressed to take up any question of party interest; 'but here I am, instruct me, and I'll do my best;' and there is a very piquant anecdote current in illustration of what many of his friends thought his reckless reliance on his audacity and wit. On the trial of Warren Hastings, Sheridan, as I need hardly say, took what is called the Begum charge; and when the evidence was complete upon each charge, the manager was called upon for his reply. It was one of the rules of the court that every reference to a specific statement in the evidence should be verified at once by a reference to the minutes; and it was the custom, therefore, for the managers to be accompanied in their box by a friend or secretary to carry their bag of papers, and to read any document or passage in the evidence that might be called for by the Lords. Sheridan asked Mr Michael Angelo Taylor to act this part for him; and on the morning of the speech, Mr Taylor asked Sheridan for the bag. 'Bag! I have no bag,' was Sheridan's reply; 'neither bag nor papers. We must manage as well as we can without them; and when the papers are called for, you must put the best countenance you can upon it. As for myself,' added Sheridan, 'I shall abuse Ned Law, ridicule Plumer's long orations, make the court laugh, please the women, and, with your aid, get triumphantly through the task.' The court listened to Sheridan's opening of the case with the profoundest attention; but when he came to contrast the evidence of the Commons with that adduced by Hastings, it was not long before the Chancellor interrupted him with a request that the printed minutes to which he referred should be read. Sheridan answered that his friend Mr Taylor would read them; and Mr Taylor affected to send for the bag, while the orator begged leave, in the meantime, to proceed. Again, however, his statements rendered a reference to the minutes necessary, and again he was interrupted by the Chancellor, while an outcry after Mr Sheridan's bag was raised in all directions. At first the blame was laid on the solicitor's clerk; then a messenger was despatched to Mr Sheridan's house. In the meantime the orator was proceeding brilliantly in his argument, and, on some further interruption and expostulation from the Chancellor, raised his voice, and said, in a dignified tone: 'On the part of the Commons, and as a manager of the impeachment, I shall conduct my case as I think proper. I mean to be correct; and your lordships, having the printed minutes before you, will afterwards see whether I am right or wrong.' During the bustle produced by the inquiries after the bag, Mr Fox, alarmed at the inconvenience which, he feared the want of it might occasion to Sheridan,

ran up from the manager's room, and demanded eagerly the cause of this mistake from Mr Taylor, who, hiding his mouth with his hand, whispered, in a tone that Fox only too well understood: 'The man has no bag!' Standing by itself, this looks like the *ne plus ultra* of audacity and wit. Yet we know now, upon evidence which it is impossible to doubt, that this, after all, was a mere stage-trick to raise that sort of surprise at the readiness of his resources, which it was the favourite triumph of his vanity to create. 'I have it on the authority of Mr William Smythe,' says Tom Moore in his sketch, 'that, previously to the delivery of this speech, Sheridan passed two or three days alone at Wanstead, so occupied from morning till night in writing and reading of papers as to complain in the evenings that he "had motes before his eyes."

And this was the case with all Sheridan's speeches. He could not speak—and, with one or two trifling exceptions, never made any attempt to speak—without the most elaborate preparation. Moore found the manuscripts of most of his speeches in his desk. At first, Sheridan had written out his speeches word for word, after sketching them in the rough in an old copy-book; and the showier passages (Moore tells us) were generally written two or three times over (often without any material change in their form) upon small detached pieces of paper, or on cards. To such minutiæ of effect did he attend, indeed, that Moore found, in more than one instance, a memorandum made of the precise place in which the words 'Good God! Mr Speaker' were to be introduced. It was, in fact, upon these 'bits of purple,' as Canning used to call them, that Sheridan concentrated all his powers in the preparation of his speeches. He left the points of his argument to shift for themselves, frequently apparently relying upon his own good sense, or the inspiration of the moment, to suggest the line of his observation or criticism. This was the very reverse of Burke's plan. He worked out his line of argument, in preparing his speeches, as closely as a mathematician works out his calculations of a star's orbit, and left the work of amplification and adornment to the fancy of the moment.

In the preparation of epigrams, special phrases, and metaphors too, Sheridan was almost finical in his criticism. They were written down on cards and scraps of paper, conned over, altered, revised, and recast till they were brought into the most vivid form in which it was possible to set the thought or the sarcasm; and then they were thrown off either in a speech or in conversation with the careless and insouciant air of a man uttering an impromptu. I have not space to give more than one or two illustrations of this. Here, however, is a striking instance at hand in his famous speech upon the state of Ireland. 'I cannot think patiently of such petty squabbles,' says Sheridan, rising from a vein of banter about trifles into one of his flights of eloquence—'I cannot think patiently of such petty squabbles, while Bonaparte is grasping the nations; while he is surrounding France, not with that iron frontier, for which the wish and childish ambition of Louis XIV. was so eager, but with kingdoms of his own creation; securing the gratitude of higher minds as the hostage, and the fears of others as pledges for his safety. His are no ordinary fortifications.'

His martello towers are thrones; sceptres tipped with crowns are the palisadoes of his intrenchments, and kings are his sentinels.' Now, that sentence had been conned over and tried in form after form on scraps of paper. Here are two or three versions of it in the rough: 'Contrast the different attitudes and occupations of the two governments: B. eighteen months from his capital; headquarters in the villages—neither Berlin nor Warsaw; dethroning and creating thrones. The works he raises are monarchies; sceptres his palisadoes; thrones his martello towers.' 'Commissioning kings, erecting thrones, martello towers; Cambacérés count noses; Austrians, fine dressed, like Pompey's troops.' 'B. fences with sceptres; his martello towers are thrones: he alone is France.'

His impromptu speeches were, like his letters, generally poor and pointless; and when the conversation at dinner happened to take a turn for which he was not prepared either by thought or reading, Sir Walter Scott says Sheridan would sit sullen and silent, swilling glass after glass, rather a hindrance than a help; and Moore, colouring this statement a little, says Sheridan would 'wait patiently through a whole evening for the exact moment when the shaft, which he had ready feathered, might be let fly with effect. There was no effort, either obvious or disguised, to lead to the subject—no "question detached" (as he himself expresses it) "to draw you into the ambuscade of his ready-made joke;" and, when the lucky moment did arrive, the natural and accidental manner in which he would let this treasured sentence fall from his lips, considerably added to the astonishment and the charm. So bright a thing, produced so easily, seemed like the delivery of Wieland's Amanda in a dream; and his own apparent unconsciousness of the value of what he said might have deceived dull people into the idea that there was really nothing in it.' His *fort* in conversation was banter; and he shone best when attacking some person in the company, or some opinion which he had heard expressed. Byron thought him superb in this. 'I have seen him cut up Whitbread,' he says in his diary, 'quiz Madame de Staél, annihilate Coleman, and do little less by some others (whose names as friends I set not down) of good fame and ability.'

Of course, like all men of wit, Sheridan could throw out retorts and sarcasms on the spur of the moment; and when driven to bay, he was generally equal to the occasion. His reply to Pitt when taunted in the House of Commons with his genius for the stage, was very apt. 'Flattered and encouraged by the right honourable gentleman's panegyric on my talents, if ever I again engage in the compositions he alludes to, I may be tempted to an act of presumption—to attempt an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters, the character of the Angry Boy in the *Alchemist*. There was a touch of the master, too, in his reply to the lady, who, after pestering him at a country-house half the morning to walk out with her, and being put off with excuses on account of the weather, discovered him at last escaping by a side-door. 'Well, I see it has cleared up, Mr Sheridan,' said the lady with all a lady's archness under the circumstances. 'Why, yes,' said Sheridan, making good his escape, 'it has cleared up enough for one, but not for two.' His excuse to the man who

remonstrated with him for drinking when his theatre was in flames: 'Well, sir, and may not a man drink a glass of wine by his own fireside?' is characteristic, but second-hand. It is at least as old as Hierocles. His reply, however, to the watchman who found him half-seas over in Covent Garden, and asked him for his name—'Wilberforce'—is, I believe, as authentic as it is humorous. But it was not in sallies of this kind that Sheridan threw out his best things. His wit was not like that of Theodore Hook and Douglas Jerrold, of Horne Tooke and Sydney Smith; it was rather like that of Rabelais and Butler. Sheridan, like Swift, was of a saturnine humour; and his wittiest sayings—those by which he will be best remembered—were those which he had turned off when he was lying in bed in the morning, when idling at his dressing-table, or at his desk preparing for the after-dinner chat of the evening.

Of the art of concealing art, however, Sheridan was a master; and till Tom Moore revealed his secret by printing and publishing every scrap of manuscript in Sheridan's portfolio that he could put together and decipher, every one, I believe, thought Sheridan's powers of imagination, eloquence, and wit those of an improvisatore. Even with the help of these memoranda, it is not always easy to distinguish the fruit of inspiration from the result of labour; for Sheridan had a happy knack of adapting his recollections to the necessities of the moment, and of passing off as an impromptu a stroke of wit that he had probably been turning over in his manuscripts years before for a different purpose, and then abandoned as hopeless. The neatly turned and pithy sentence in which he once disposed of a couple of hours' eloquence from the ministerial benches—'The right honourable gentleman is indebted to his memory for his jests, and to his imagination for his facts'—was a happy adaptation, in a light and quotable form, of a sentence which he had jotted down and elaborated for one of his comedies, and then abandoned. Here is the sentence as it stands in his manuscript: 'He certainly has a great deal of fancy, and a very good memory; but, with a perverse ingenuity, he employs those qualities as no other person does, for he employs his fancy in his narratives, and keeps his recollection for his wit: when he makes his jokes, you applaud the accuracy of his memory; and 'tis only when he states his facts that you admire the flights of his imagination.' This was turned off, and altered, and condensed time after time, and then thrown aside, like so many others of the same kind, as too elaborate for light and sparkling dialogue; and then brought forth years after in the form in which it now lives in every one's recollection.

Here, too, we have the key to Sheridan's system of working out the dialogue of his plays. Those who know how to read between the lines, may trace the marks of labour in every line of Sheridan's, in every turn of his phrases, and even in his selection of epithets. Take, for instance, the *School for Scandal*. It is at once the most original and the most perfect of all his works. Plot there is none, or next to none. The characters are all sketched with a light hand. There is no attempt at anything strikingly original in the representations of any of them. Charles and Joseph Surface are but shadows of Tom Jones and Blifil; and with the exception of Sir Peter Teazle, the rest of the

dramatis personæ are all of the most ordinary description. All the interest of the piece turns upon its dialogue, and the two or three incidents that mark its development. Yet so adroitly are these incidents contrived, so light and sparkling and characteristic is the dialogue, that the *School for Scandal* stands out in the literature of the drama side by side with the most brilliant and finished creations of the genius of Molière and Shakspeare. In Shakspeare and Molière you never miss the shadow of the handwriting on the wall ; you may trace the author through all his dialogue. You may know Sheridan, too, everywhere by his wit. But I venture to say that no one ever yet thought of tracing the hand of a slow and saturnine man of letters in the idiomatic turns of expression, the light and sparkling fancies, and the piquant badinage that constitute the charm of the *School for Scandal*. Yet we know, as a matter of fact, that no man ever wrote poetry or fiction more slowly or laboriously than Sheridan ; and of all Sheridan's plays, none was written with more thought and labour, with more pains, than the *School for Scandal*. The *Rivals* was thrown off in six weeks or a couple of months at a country-house in the autumn. The *Duenna*, with the help of a hint or two from Wycherley, was written probably in about the same time ; and the *Critic* bears too many marks of the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* for us to suppose that it was the result of very much cogitation on the part of Sheridan. The *School for Scandal* was all his own ; and every scene, every incident, and every phrase in the dialogue had been turned over in Sheridan's mind for months. Moore thinks, from his examination of the manuscripts, that the first parts of this play were written before the *Rivals*, or at least very soon after it ; and though none of the manuscripts are dated, it is sufficiently obvious, from the scrappy way in which his ideas are jotted down, and bits of dialogue scrawled out here and there in his manuscript books, that the play was rarely out of his mind for two or three years. His original intention seems to have been to sketch out a couple of plays ; and the rough drafts bear many traces of Wycherley and Vanbrugh. Lady Sneerwell and Spatter, Mrs Candour and Clerimont, the original of Charles Surface, are the principal figures in the first sketch. Sir Peter and Lady Teazle do not appear till the second draft is sketched out ; and in this draft Sir Peter is simply a vulgar old man who has 'left of trade,' and married a skittish hare-brained wife. His name in this draft is Solomon. Here is the opening scene :

'Old Teazle (*alone*).—In the year '44, I married my first wife ; the wedding was at the end of the year—ay, 'twas in December ; yet, before Ann. Dom. '45, I repented. A month before, we swore we preferred each other to the whole world—perhaps we spoke truth ; but when we came to promise to love each other till death, there I am sure we lied. Well, Fortune owed me a good turn ; in '48 she died. Ah, silly Solomon, in '52 I find thee married again ! Here, too, is a catalogue of ills—Thomas, born February 12 ; Jane, born January 6 ; so they go on to the number of five. However, by death I stand credited but by one. Well, Margery, rest her soul ! was a queer creature ; when she was gone, I felt awkward at first, and being sensible that wishes availed nothing, I often wished for her return. For ten years more I kept

my senses, and lived single. O blockhead, dolt Solomon ! Within this twelvemonth, thou art married again—married to a woman thirty years younger than thyself ; a fashionable woman. Yet I took her with caution ; she had been educated in the country ; but now she has more extravagance than the daughter of an earl, more levity than a countess. What a defect it is in our laws, that a man who has once been branded in the forehead, should be hanged for the second offence.'

When the two sketches were thrown together, and Sheridan had struck out the intrigue upon which the play now turns, 'Old Teazle' was knighted, and turned into a gentleman ; the coarser traits in the original conception of Lady Teazle were toned down ; Maria was endowed with corresponding grace and beauty ; Spunge and Spatter were transformed into Tripe and Snake ; and the whole of the dialogue was again thrown into the crucible, elaborated here, softened down there, scenes transposed, and strokes of wit taken out of one mouth and put into that of another, and prosy and pointless soliloquies broken up into bright and piquant bits of conversation. Two or three of the scenes were re-written time after time before they attained their present degree of point and polish. The scene in which Charles Surface as Clerimont makes his first appearance in the draft is of the crudest construction. Its language is without a spark of Sheridan's spirit, and the incidents are neither novel nor natural. This scene was put through trial after trial. That exquisite scene, again, between Lady Teazle and Joseph Surface was brought out with great labour. It appears in three or four forms, and in each form it is hardly legible from alterations and interlineations. With the exception of the four or five closing scenes, the marks of labour that distinguish this scene distinguish in hardly a less degree all parts of the play. Moore, in looking through Sheridan's manuscripts, found 'numerous transcripts of every act, scattered promiscuously through six or seven books, with new interlineations and memorandums to each.' The last five scenes alone bear signs of haste ; and these, I presume, were the scenes which regular says were written when Sheridan was locked up in the manager's room, with a bottle of Madeira, and two or three old stage-plays to crib from. Of these scenes there is but one rough draft, scribbled upon loose pieces of paper, apparently just as they came to hand ; and on the last leaf of all, which exists just as we may suppose it to have been despatched by him to the copyist, there is the following curious specimen of doxology, written hastily at the bottom : Finished at last, thank God ! R. B. SHERIDAN.—Amen ! W. HOPKINS. Knowing what we do of Sheridan's habits of composition, and of the style of his manuscripts, we can easily appreciate the pathos that underlies these sighs of relief.

It is not often that we can trace the hand of an author through his work as closely as we trace that of Sheridan, especially where, as in this case, there is neither diary nor correspondence to give us a clue to the manuscripts. But Sheridan has left every scrap of paper, and every card containing the slightest hint or memorandum, all his original sketches, all the odds and ends of his *vers de société*, all his outlines for dramas that were never written ; and through these we may trace him in every mood. Here we find him scribbling out a

song or a pasquinade ; jotting down his thoughts first in a sort of poetical prose, and breaking out, now and then, into a rhyme or a metrical line. Planning some verses on the short duration of life, and the change that death produces, for instance, he jots down a triplet :

Of that same tree which gave the box,
Now rattling in the hand of FOX,
Perhaps his coffin shall be made ;

and then rambles into prose on what Moore calls a sort of knight-errantry after thoughts and images : 'The lawn thou hast chosen for thy bridal shift—thy shroud may be of the same piece. That flower thou hast bought to feed thy vanity—from the same tree thy corpse may be decked. Reynolds shall, like his colours, fly ; and Brown, when mingled with the dust, manure the grounds he once laid out. Death is life's second childhood ; we return to the breast from whence we came, are weaned . . .' These suggestions were afterwards reduced to the form of poetry ; and when he had a piece like this in hand, he seems to have been puzzling his wits everywhere to find rhymes to fit to the principal names that he contemplated introducing. He was very fond of trifling with rhymes in this way ; and when he did hit upon a name or an incident that struck his fancy—' Mr Bigg,' 'Lady Jane,' or the Loss of a Trunk—he taxed his fancy for lines to suit every rhyme in the language corresponding with the one that formed the keynote of his piece. Here is a specimen of these squibs. The lines are on a Mr Bigg :

I own he's not famed for a reel or a jig ;
Tom Sheridan there surpasses Tom *Bigg* ;
For, lamed in one thigh, he is obliged to go zig-
Zag, like a crab—so no dancer is *Bigg*.
Those who think him a coxcomb, or call him a prig,
How little they know of the mind of my *Bigg* !
Though he ne'er can be mine, Hope will catch at a
twig—
Two Deaths—and I yet may become Mrs *Bigg*.
Oh, give me, with him, but a cottage and pig,
And content I would live on Beans, Bacon, and
Bigg.

Like the *School for Scandal*, most of his pieces seem to have grown under his hand—to have been written, that is, without any preconceived plan. Explaining the composition of the *Rivals* in a note to his father-in-law, Mr Linley, Sheridan says : 'I had not written a line of it two months ago, except a scene or two, which I believe you have seen in an odd act of a little farce ;' and the probability is, I think, that he appropriated the plot of his mother's unpublished *Trip to Bath* as the groundwork of the piece. In the *Duenna*, he took the intrigue in Wycherley's *Country Wife* for his plot, and wrote up to that. The Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* forms the framework of the *Critic*. When he had thus fixed his mind upon an intrigue or plot that he thought might be turned to account, and settled a few of his characters, he seems to have scribbled down, loosely, everything that struck his fancy—bits of conversation, traits of character, epigrams, &c. He drew up in this way a plan for a comedy upon *Affectation*. What the plot of this play was to be, I have no conception. Probably he had none in his own mind. The subject, however, struck him apparently as one that might be turned to account ; and taking up one of his copy-books, he wrote on its first leaf, in

his neatest hand, 'Affectation,' added two or three names—'Sir Babble Bore, Sir Peregrine Paradox, and Feignwit'—as suggestions, probably, that arose on the spur of the moment, and then added at different times a catalogue of the 'affectations' that he meant to satirise. Here they are : 'An affectation of Business, of Accomplishments, of Love of Letters and Wit, Music, of Intrigue, of Sensibility, of Vivacity, of Silence and Importance, of Modesty, of Prodigacy, of Moroseness.' Here, too, are the skeletons of a brace of the characters whom he intended to work up :

'Character, Mr BUSTLE.—A man who delights in hurry and interruption—will take any one's business for them ; leaves word where all his plagues may follow him ; governor of all hospitals, &c. ; share in Ranelagh ; speaker everywhere, from the Vestry to the House of Commons. "I am not at home. Gad, now he has heard me, and I must be at home."—"Here am I so plagued, and there is nothing I love so much as retirement and quiet."—"You never sent after me." Let servants call in to him such a message as : "'Tis nothing but the window-tax," he hiding in a room that communicates. A young man tells him some important business in the middle of fifty trivial interruptions, and the calling of idlers ; such as fiddlers, wild-beast men, foreigners with commendatory letters, &c. Answers notes on his knee : "And so your uncle died ?—for your obliging inquiries—and left you an orphan—to cards in the evening."

'Can't bear to be doing nothing.—"Can I do anything for anybody anywhere ?" "Have been to the Secretary—written to the Treasury." "Must proceed to meet the Commissioners, and write Mr Price's little boy's exercise." The most active idler and laborious trifler.

'He does not in reality love business—only the appearance of it.—"Ha, ha ! Did my Lord say that I was always very busy ?—What ! Plagued to death ?"

'Keeps all his letters and copies.—"Mem. to meet the Hackney-coach Commissioners—to arbitrate between, &c."

'Contrast with the man of indolence, his brother.—"So, brother, just up ! and I have been, &c." One will give his money from indolent generosity ; the other his time from restlessness. "Twill be shorter to pay the bill than look for the receipt." Files letters, answered and unanswered. "Why, here are more unopened than answered !",

When he had thus formed a rough and ready conception of his principal characters in his own mind, he began scribbling dialogue. This, in its original form, is generally of a very loose and wordy description, often without point or wit. Moore thinks this was more in the way of experiment than anything else—to take the chance of a trumpery of wit or humour turning up. It was hardly ever used, although you may now and then, in comparing the rough draft with the finished copy, trace a passage here and there with little or no alteration. All the best hits, however, were carefully picked out and worked up afresh. A striking illustration of this occurs in the *School for Scandal*. 'People who utter a scandal, knowing it to be forged,' says Sir Peter Teazle in a speech in the rough draft, 'deserve the pillory more than for a forged bank-note. They can't pass the lie without putting their names on the back of it. You say no person has a right to come

on you because you didn't invent it ; but you should know that, if the drawer of the lie is out of the way, the injured party has a right to come on any of the indorsers.' In the finished copy, this thought was brought out in the dialogue with Mrs Candour in this form :

' *Mrs Candour.* But sure you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear ?

' *Sir P.* Yes, madam, I would have law-merchant for them too ; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured party should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.'

I could cite a dozen instances of this kind ; for a striking thought or comparison of this description reappears time after time in a variety of forms, and is sometimes transferred from character to character, in order to set it where it will tell with greatest effect. Sheridan was the greatest miser I know, in thought.

His manuscript very closely resembles that of Byron. It is for the most part an illegible scrawl, full of corrections and interlineations. And this is not the only point of resemblance between the poet and the dramatist. Sheridan, like Byron, was in the habit of prompting his genius by reading the plays that chimed in with his own thoughts, when preparing for composition ; and hence, as in Byron, passages are continually turning up which bear a very close analogy to those of other writers. These coincidences were probably in the mass of cases quite unconscious ; but Sheridan never scrupled, either in his speeches, his verses, or his plays, about using any thought or expression that happened to suit his purpose. The authorship was to him a matter of no concern. His hours of composition, too, were those of night ; and, like Sir Walter Scott, he was very fond of a profusion of lights. Like Tasso, Sheridan thought wine a great help in composition ; and when he sat down to work, it was generally with a bottle of Madeira at his side. ' If the thought is slow to come,' he used to say, ' a glass of good wine encourages it ; and, when it does come, a glass of good wine rewards it.'

THE LAST ESCAPE FROM SIBERIA.

WHO does not remember the pleasure with which, as a child, he read the history of *Elizabeth, or the Exiles of Siberia*, her courageous devotion, and her ultimate success. Such literature has latterly become too common among the unfortunate Poles. Her most devoted and bravest sons have been ex-patriated to the land of eternal snow, and the adieu of their sorrowing friends sounds ever in their ears, *à ne plus nous revoir*. Once or twice in a century, a general amnesty, as it is called, brings back a few to their own country ; and, even more rarely, a bold and energetic exile finds means to escape his horrible doom, and reappears among his former acquaintances, like a ghost from another world. They write the story of those wild and howling wildernesses ; and others who die there send the journals they have kept to loving friends, who publish them in Paris or Brussels, where the press is free.

Such a work is that of M. Rufin Piotrowski, almost the only example of a man sentenced to hard labour who tried to escape and succeeded. On foot, he made the long and perilous journey

over the Ural chain of mountains to Archangel, Petersburg, and Riga, without passport or help, and but little money, confiding his secret to no one, that they might not be involved in his terrible fate, if discovered.

He was one of those heroic emissaries who, after emigrating from Poland, returned to his oppressed country with impossible plans, unreflecting appeals, and crude ideas, only to suffer as a victim of Russian policy. The end of his journey was Kaminiets, in Podolia, where he gave himself out as a Frenchman who had come to give private lessons in foreign languages, and received the usual permit from the authorities without exciting any suspicion. He was soon introduced into the best society ; and the better to shield his connections, he chose the houses of Russian employés, where he suffered tortures from the remarks he heard made upon his insulted countrymen. His security rested much upon his not being supposed to understand the Polish language ; and, during the nine months that he remained, he obtained such command over himself, that the police had not the slightest suspicion of his being a Pole : the warning voice came from St Petersburg, through the spies in Paris.

Early one winter's morning he was roughly shaken out of slumber by the director of police, and carried before the governor of the province, who had come specially on this errand. His position was represented to him as one of the greatest danger, and he was recommended to make a full confession. This for many days he refused to do, until a large number of those who were his accomplices were brought before him ; and their weary, anxious faces induced him to exclaim loudly, and in his native tongue : ' Yes, I am a Pole, and have returned because I could not bear exile from my native land any longer ; here I wished to live inoffensive and quiet, confiding my secret to a few countrymen ; and I have nothing more to say.' The governor's eyes sparkled ; he was delighted that the difficulty was over ; and an immediate order was made out for the culprit's departure to Kiof. His sufferings were frightful, and were not lessened when they stopped at a hut, where some rusty chains were brought out, the rings of which were thrust over his ankles : they proved much too small, and the rust prevented the bars from turning in the sockets, so that the pain was insupportable. He was rudely carried and thrown into the carriage, and thus arrived in an almost insensible condition at the terrible fortress of Kiof.

After many months' miserable detention in this prison, which we pass over to dwell more particularly on his escape, he was sentenced to death, which was commuted to hard labour in Siberia for life ; degraded from his rank as a noble, and ordered to make the journey in chains. As soon as this was read to him, he was taken to a kibitka, or chaise, with three horses, which stood at the door ; irons were put on, and he was placed between two armed soldiers ; the gates of the fortress were shut, and the road to Siberia was before him. Many more afflicted ones than himself were passed : none but the nobility have the privilege of riding ; the commonalty are sent in convoys of from one to three hundred, and to walk to their destination occupies from one to two years. Two are chained together, and one cannot move in his sleep without awaking the other, and causing great pain. About ten thousand are sent every year—yet the

people on the road are compassionate and sympathising: the women give cakes, dried fish, or fruit. An employé came up to M. Piotrowski, and timidly offered him a small packet, saying: 'Accept that from my saint.' The convict not understanding, he added: 'You are a Pole, and do not know our customs; it is my fêté-day, when it is above all a duty to assist the unfortunate. Pray, accept it, then, in the name of my saint, after whom I am called.' The packet contained bread, salt, and money.

Night and day the journey continued, with the utmost rapidity, for about a month, when, in the middle of the night, they stopped at the fortress of Omsk, where he was placed for a few hours with a young officer who had committed some breach of discipline. They talked incessantly until the morning, so great was the pleasure of meeting with an educated companion. A map of Siberia was in the room, which Piotrowski examined with feverish interest. 'Ah!' said his companion, 'are you meditating flight? Pray, do not think of it: many of your fellow-countrymen have tried it; and, tracked on all sides, tortured with hunger, and wild with despair, have resorted to suicide, to save themselves from the consequences of the knout and a life of misery.'

At midday he was brought before Prince Gortschakoff, and the critical moment of his fate arrived: he might either be sent to some of the government factories in the neighbourhood, or to the hell of convicts, the mines underground. An hour passed in cruel suspense whilst this was debated. At length one of the council announced to him that he was to be sent to the distillery of Ekaterininski, three hundred miles to the north of Omsk. The clerks around congratulated him on his destination; and his departure was immediate. On a wintry morning he reached a vast plain near the river Irtilsh, on which a wretched village of about two hundred wooden huts was built, around a factory. When introduced into the clerks' office, a young man who was writing jumped up and threw himself into his arms: he also was a Pole from Cracow, a well-known poet, and sent away for life as 'a measure of precaution.' Soon they were joined by another political criminal: these spoke rapidly and with extreme emotion, entreating their new friend to bear everything in the most submissive and patient manner, as the only means of escaping from menial employment, and being promoted to the clerks' office. Not long was he permitted to rest; a convict, branded on his forehead and cheeks, the superintendent of the others, came and ordered him to take a broom, and sweep away a mass of dirt that some masons had left: a murderer was his companion; and thus he went on until nightfall, when his two friends were permitted to visit him, in the presence of the soldiers and convicts, most of the latter of whom had been guilty of frightful crimes. Thus day after day passed on, in sweeping, carrying wood and water, amid snow and frost; sad, painful memories, on which it is useless to dwell; the barracks a scene of drunkenness and debauchery at night, and his companions the worst of mankind. His good conduct brought him in a year and a half to the office, where he received ten francs a month, and the work was light. During this time, he saw and conversed with many farmers and travellers from a distance, and gained every information about the roads, rivers, &c., with a view to the

escape he was ever meditating. The natives unite with the soldiers in exercising an incessant supervision over the hundreds of escaping convicts, and a common saying among the Tartars is: 'In killing a squirrel you get but one skin, whilst a convict has three—his coat, his shirt, and his skin.'

Slowly and painfully he collected the materials for his journey. First of all, a passport was an essential. A convict who had been sentenced for making false money, still possessed an excellent stamp of the royal arms; this Piotrowski bought for a few francs. The sheet of paper was easily obtained in the office, and the passport forged. After long waiting, he procured a Siberian wig—that is, a sheepskin with the wool turned in, to preserve the head from the cold—three shirts, a sheepskin bournouse, and a red velvet cap bordered with fur—the dress of a well-to-do peasant. On a sharp frosty night he quitted Ekaterininski for Tara, having determined to try the road to the north for Archangel, as the least frequented. A large fair was shortly to be held at Irbit, at the foot of the Urals, and he hoped to hide himself in the vast crowd of people that frequented it. Soon after he had crossed the river, a sledge was heard behind him; he trembled for his safety—his pursuers were perhaps coming.

'Where are you going?' shouted the peasant who drove it.

'To Tara.'

'Give me ten sous, and I will take you.'

'No; it is too much. I will give eight.'

'Well, so let it be. Jump in quickly.'

He was set down in the street; and knocking at a house, inquired in the Russian fashion: 'Have you horses to hire?'

'Yes—a pair. Where to?'

'To Tara. I am a commercial traveller, and going to meet my master. I am behind my time, and wish to go as quickly as possible.'

No sooner had they set off than a snow-storm came on, and the driver lost his way. They wandered about all night in the forest, and it was impossible to describe the anguish and suffering Piotrowski endured.

'Return to Tara,' said he, as the day broke: 'I will engage another sledge; and you need not expect any money from me, after the folly you have shewn in losing your way.'

They turned, but had hardly gone a mile before the driver jumped up, looked around, and cried: 'This is our road.' Then making up for lost time, he set him down at a friend's house, where he procured some tea and fresh horses. On he went in safety, renewing his horses at small expense, until late at night, when he suffered from a most unfortunate robbery. He had not money at hand to pay the conductor. They turned into a public-house, where a crowd of drunken people were celebrating the carnival. He drew out some paper-money to get change, when the crowd coming round, some one seized his papers, among which were about thirty francs, his invaluable passport, and a note in which he had minutely inscribed all the towns and villages he must pass through on the road to Archangel. He was in despair. The very first day, a quarter of his money was gone, and the only thing by which he hoped to evade suspicion, his passport. He dare not appeal to the police, and was obliged to submit.

Regret and hesitation were not to be thought of;

rapid travelling is common in Siberia, and he soon found himself on the high-road to Irbit, crowded with an innumerable mass of sledges, going or returning to the fair, filled with merchandise and peasants, who guide their agile horses with unparalleled skill. It is the season of gain and good humour; and the people shew it by unbounded gaiety. Piotrowski took courage, returned the salutations of the passers-by—for how could he be distinguished in such a crowd? The gates of Irbit were reached on the third day. ‘Halt, and shew your passport,’ cried an official; but added in a whisper: ‘Give me twenty kopecks, and pass quickly.’ The demand was willingly gratified, and with some difficulty he procured a night’s lodging, lying on the floor amidst a crowd of peasants, who had previously supped on radish-soup, dried fish, oatmeal gruel, with oil and pickled cabbage.

Up at daybreak, he took care to make the orthodox salutations before the holy images which are found in the corner of every Russian dwelling; and passing rapidly through the crowded town, he walked out of the opposite gate, for, henceforwards, his scanty funds demanded that the journey should be made on foot. In the midst of a heavily falling snow, he managed to keep the track, avoiding the villages, and, when hungry, drawing a piece of frozen bread from his bag. At nightfall, he buried himself in the forest, hollowed a deep hole in the snow, and found a hard but warm bed, where he gained the repose he so greatly needed. Another hard day, with a dry cutting wind, forced him to ask for shelter at night in a cottage, which was granted without hesitation. He described himself as a workman, going to the iron-foundries at Bohotole, on the Ural Mountains. Whilst the supper was preparing, he dried his clothes, and stretched himself on a bench with inexpressible satisfaction. He fancied he had neglected no precautions; his prayers and salutations had been made; and yet suspicion was awakened, as it appeared, by the sight of his three shirts, which no peasant possesses. Three men entered, and roughly shook him from sleep, demanding his passport.

‘By what right do you ask for it? Are you police?’

‘No; but we are inhabitants of the village.’

‘And can you enter houses, and ask for passports? Who can say whether you do not mean to rob me of my papers? But my answer is ready. I am Lavrenti Kouzmine, going to Bohotole; and it is not the first time I have passed through the country.’

He then entered into details of the road and the fair at Irbit, ending by shewing his permission to pass, which, as it bore a stamp, satisfied these ignorant men.

‘Forgive us,’ said they: ‘we thought you were an escaped convict; some of them pass this way.’

Henceforward, he dared not seek the shelter of a house: from the middle of February to the beginning of April, in the midst of one of the severest winters ever known, his couch was in the snow. Frozen bread was his food for days together, and the absence of warm aliments brought him face to face with the terrible spectres of cold and hunger. The Urals were reached, and he began to climb their wooded heights. On passing through a little village at nightfall, a voice cried: ‘Who is there?’

‘A traveller.’

‘Well, would you like to come and sleep here?’
‘May God recompense you, yes; if it will not inconvenience you.’

An aged couple lived there; good people, who prepared a meagre repast, which seemed a feast to Piotrowski; the greatest comfort of all being that he could take off his clothes. They gave him his breakfast, and would not accept any remuneration but his warm and cordial thanks. In the evening, he met with a convoy of *yamstchiks*, or drivers, who were returning from the fair with thirty sledges of goods, each drawn by one horse, and guided by seven *yamstchiks*. Their skill in descending the mighty slopes of the mountain is wonderful; the road is narrow, and bordered by walls of snow so high, that men and horses completely disappear in them. When two convoys meet, the smaller turns out of the road, and buries itself until only the horses’ ears are visible. This strange evolution finished, the men belonging to both assist in drawing horses and vehicles out; but many dead bodies of the former strew the roadside, the fatigues are so great.

One evening, our poor friend’s life was nearly extinct; the way was lost, the hail pierced his skin, his supply of bread was exhausted, and after vainly dragging his weary limbs, he fell into a kind of torpor. A loud voice roused him: ‘What are you doing here?’

‘I am making a pilgrimage to the monastery of Solovetsk, but the storm prevented my seeing the track, and I have not eaten for several days.’

‘It is not surprising; we who live on the spot often wander away. There, drink that.’

The speaker gave him a bottle containing some brandy, which burned him so fearfully, that in his pain he danced about.

‘Now, try to calm yourself,’ said the good Samaritan, giving him some bread and dried fish, which Piotrowski ate ravenously, saying: ‘I thank you with all my heart: may God bless you for your goodness.’

‘Ah, well, do not say so much; we are both Christians. Now, try to walk a little.’

He was a trapper; and led him into the right path, pointing out a village inn where he could get rest and refreshment. Piotrowski managed to crawl to the place, and then fainted away. When he recovered himself, he asked for radish-soup, but could not swallow it; and towards noon he fell asleep on the bench, never awaking until the same time on the next day, when the host roused him. Sleep, rest, and warmth restored the weary traveller, who again started on his long pilgrimage.

The town of Veliki-Ustiug was reached, where he determined to change his character and become a pilgrim, going to pray to the holy images of Solovetsk, on the White Sea. There are four of these holy places to which pious Russians resort, and everywhere the wayfarers are well received; hospitality and alms being freely dispensed to those who are going to pray for the peace of the donor. Passports are not rigorously exacted, and he hoped to join himself to a company, trusting to be less marked than if alone. As he was standing irresolute in the market-place, a young man accosted him, and finding that they were bound to the same place, invited him to join their party. There were about twenty; but no less than two thousand were in the city on their way, waiting until the thaw should have opened the Dwina for the rafts and

boats which would transport them to Archangel, and then to Solovetsk. It was a scene for Chaucer: the sincere ascetic detached from this world; the half-idiot, who sought to be a saint; the knave who played upon the charity of others; and the astute hypocrite. The rafts are loaded with corn, and the pilgrims receive a free passage; or a small sum of money is given them if they consent to row; from forty to sixty sailors being required for each, the oars consisting of a thin fir-tree. Piotrowski was only too happy to increase his small store of money by working. At the break of day, before starting, the captain cried: 'Seat yourselves, and pray to God.' Every one squatted down like a Mussulman for a moment, then rose and made a number of salutations and crossings: and next, down to the poorest, each threw a small piece of money into the river, to secure a propitious voyage.

Fifteen days passed, during which Piotrowski learned to be an expert oarsman: then the golden spires of Archangel rose before them; a cry of joy was uttered by all; and the rowers broke off the lower part of their oars with a frightful crash: such is the universal custom. It was a heartfelt prayer of gratitude that Piotrowski raised to God for having brought him thus far in safety. How pleasant was the sight of the ships, with their flags of a thousand colours, after the snow and eternal forests of the Urals! But there was again disappointment; he wandered along the piers, but could not find a single vessel bound for France or Germany, and not daring to enter the cafés, where perhaps the captains might have been, he left Archangel in sadness, determined to skirt the coast towards Omega. He would thus pass the celebrated monastery without the necessity of stopping, and pretend that he was proceeding to Novgorod and Moscow on the same pious pilgrimage.

Through marshes and blighted fir-plantations the weary wayfarer sped, the White Sea rising frequently into storms of the utmost grandeur; but the season was lovely, and the sun warm, so that camping out offered less hardship: the wolves howled around him, but happily he never saw them. Many soldiers, who were Poles, were established at different points, to take charge of the canals. He often listened to their sad complaints, and once remarked to one: 'But they do not beat you much!'

'How? Not beat us!' was the answer, accompanied by a bitter laugh. 'Do you think the czar lets us eat his bread gratuitously?'

Another sad spectacle were the convoys of Jewish children, who are taken away from their homes in Poland at the age of ten or twelve, carried to Archangel, to bring up as soldiers or sailors, and taught to forget the religion and customs of their fathers. It was heart-rending to see these poor children, their heads shaved, driven before the rough soldiers, and dying on the road of hunger and cold.

Having reached Vytegra, he was accosted on the shore by a peasant who asked where he was going. On hearing his story, he said: 'You are the man I want. I am going to St Petersburg. My boat is small, and you can assist me to row.'

The crafty fellow evidently intended to profit by the pilgrim's arms without wages; but, after long debate, he agreed to supply Piotrowski with food during the transport. It seemed strange, indeed,

to go to the capital—like running into the jaws of the lion—but he seized every occasion to pass on, lest his papers should be asked for. As they coasted down through Lake Ladoga and the Neva, they took in some women as passengers, who were servants, and had been home to see their parents. One of them, an aged washerwoman, was so teased by the others, that Piotrowski took her part, and in return she offered him some very useful assistance.

'My daughter,' she said, 'will come to meet me, and she will find you a suitable lodging.'

It will be guessed with what joy he accepted the proposal; and during all the time spent in the boat, no one came to ask for the passports. The house she took him to was sufficiently miserable; as the Russians say: 'It was the bare ground, with the wrist for a pillow.' He asked his hostess if he must see the police to arrange the business of his passport.

'No,' she said; 'if you only stay a few days, it is useless; they have become so exacting, that they would require me to accompany you, and my time is too precious.'

As he passed along the quays, looking for a ship, his eyes rested on one to sail for Riga on the following morning. He could scarcely master his emotion. The pilot on board called out: 'If you want a place to Riga, come here.'

'I certainly want one; but I am too poor a man to sail in a steamer: it would cost too much.'

He named a very small sum, and said: 'Come; why do you hesitate?'

'I only arrived yesterday, and the police have not *visé* my passport.'

'That will occupy three days: go without a *visé*! Be here at seven o'clock, and wait for me.'

Both were to their time. The sailor said: 'Give me some money' and handed him a yellow paper; the clock struck; the barrier was opened; and, like a dream, he was safely on the ocean.

The journey to Riga, through Courland and Lithuania, need not be dwelt upon; the difficulty of crossing the Russian frontier into Prussia was still to be managed. He chose the daytime; and when the sentinels had each turned their backs, he jumped over the wall of the first of the three glacis. No noise was heard. The second was tried, and the firing of pistols shewed that he was perceived; he rushed on to the third, and, breathless and exhausted, gained a little wood, where for many hours he remained concealed. He was in Prussia. Wandering on through Memel, Tilsit, and Königsberg, he decided at the last place to take a ship the next morning to Elbing, where he would be near to Posen, and among his compatriots. Sitting down on a heap of stones, he intended taking refuge for the night in a cornfield; but sleep overcame him, and he was rudely awakened in the darkness by a policeman. His stammering and confused replies awakened suspicion, and, to his shame and grief, he was carried off to prison. He announced himself as a French cotton-spinner, but returning from Russia, and without passport. Not a word he said was believed.

At length, after a month's detention, weary of being considered a concealed malefactor, he asked to speak to M. Fleury, a French advocate, who assisted at his trial. To him he confessed the whole truth. Nothing could equal his advocate's consternation and astonishment.

'What a misfortune!' he said; 'we must give you up to the Russians; they have just sent many of your countrymen across the frontier. There is but one way: write to Count Eulenberg; tell your story, and trust to his mercy.'

After ten days, he received a vague reply, desiring him to have patience. The affair got wind in the town, and a gentleman came to him, asking if he would accept him as bail. Efforts had been made in his favour, and the police were ready to set him free. M. Kamke, his kind friend, took him home, and entertained him for a week; but an order came from Berlin to send the prisoner back to Russia, and he received warning in time to escape. Letters to various friends on the way were given him, to facilitate his journey; and just four years after he had left Paris, he reached it in safety again, after having crossed the Urals, slept four months in the snow, jumped over the Russian frontier in the midst of balls, and passed through so many sufferings and privations.

THE PULLMAN HOTEL EXPRESS.

We know of nothing in Europe, in the way of Railway Travelling, that affords so much of convenience, comfort, ease, and elegance, as the Pullman Hotel Express Train on the Union and Central Pacific Railroads, running between Omaha and San Francisco. In it the science of locomotion has been reduced to a *system*, as orderly, convenient, and economical as are the management and accommodations of any home. It has taken away the fatigue, ennui, and actual loss of health while journeying; and has given instead the home surroundings of the parlour and *cuisine*. In fact, there are now arrangements being made at various points in the Union, by parties who will take one of these trains next season for the same reason that they would secure a villa at Saratoga or Newport—to give them a home for pleasure and recreation for the summer weeks; only with this great difference. All accommodations at watering-places, at the best, are meagre in space, inferior in quality, and expensive in character, and in time become wearisome by sameness. On the Pullman cars, the room is ample; conveniences for eating, sleeping, and leisure are of the best; the cost less than the charges at hotels at the public resorts; and the scenes hourly changing from hill to dale, from river to lake, from prairie to mountain; from the affluence of the tropics to the snows of the Sierra Nevada.

Let us step aboard this train, which realises, as near as can be done, all the comforts any of us will leave behind us, and which, with all needed conveniences, will be our abiding-place during the journey to the shores of the Pacific. The train is made up in the following order, for the whole journey. First, after the engine, the baggage-car, sufficiently well built and finished for passengers if required; then the smoking-car, in one end of which is the larder, where the provisions for the trip are arranged, as they would be in a first-class hotel, in ice-boxes and provision-cellars. In the smoking division of the car are the usual fittings up of such a room in chairs, lounges, tables, &c. The baggage and smoking cars are each fifty feet long, and ten feet wide, which is the uniform width of the train. Next comes the commissary-car, fifty-six feet long, with the kitchen at one end,

occupying about one-third the car, and the rest arranged with every convenience of your own dining-hall, in furniture, servants, &c.; and where, at leisure, you can enjoy your meals, as the train bears you swiftly onward to your journey's end.

At meals, the *modus operandi* is as follows: Entering the commissary-car you take your seat, and at your side you find a clock-bell; you ring it; and a sable waiter, neatly clad in white jacket, bearing the monogram of the Pullman Company, appears, and presents you a bill of fare. While you gauge your appetite, and consider what you will order to satisfy it, the waiter spreads your table with a neat linen cloth, and, touching a spring, opens the mirror between windows at your side, disclosing to view the silver service belonging to each quartette of diners. These are scarcely arranged before your order is executed, and your savoury steak of beef or antelope, your mountain trout or broiled chicken, are placed before you smoking hot. Wine, tea, coffee, or fresh milk are at your command. The extent, variety, or cost of the very diversified dinner you may select, may be ascertained by the bills of fare, which are daily served on the Pullman Hotel Express Train; and the same variety can be had appropriate for breakfast and supper.

Next comes one of the drawing-room and sleeping cars, which, on trucks embracing every desirable adjustment for care and comfort, roll both smoothly and safely. Sofas and easy-chairs line the sides; double windows exclude heat, cold, and dust; stout ventilators pump in, without unpleasant draft, a constant stream of pure air. At night, sofas and chairs turn into bedsteads; a hair mattress drops down from some impossible hiding-place, clean sheets, blankets, and pillow-cases slide out of table and folio, and by magic springs, sliding screens and curtains make up a couch for rest, sweet in linen, quiet, and perfect ventilation—as your own bed-chamber; and where you may sleep as little or as long as your fancy may dictate. Next we come to the elegant saloon-car, the general rendezvous for the passengers of the entire train; where, especially at evening, they may gather as one family, for free intercourse. In the centre of the car is a parlour organ of the best construction; and here, amid surroundings sumptuous in the subdued lights, swelling music, and the converse of friends, the hours glide away in enjoyment. When required, this car also, like the drawing-room coaches, affords sleeping accommodation for twenty-eight double berths; the needed equipments for which spring magically from hiding-places in panels and furniture on all sides of the vehicle.

Following the saloon-car, are two drawing-room cars, similar to the one described, and thus the train is completed.

As the train stands ready for the trip, there is complete protection for passing between the cars on the whole line, and the most approved brakes for stopping the same; while the whole running gear and adjustment of springs is so noiseless and perfect, that reading, writing, and talking are uninterrupted during motion. The cars are lighted by lamps from the top, and also from the sides, hidden in the daytime by mirrors, but disclosed to view at night by the raising of these mirrors in a groove, thus giving to each section a light for itself, that can be used for reading or any purpose as long as desired: this single feature

is of incalculable comfort and pleasure to all. The cars are heated by hot salt water in pipes under each seat, generated from Baker's patent heaters, which never freezing, and always uniform in action, diffuse an equable atmosphere of heat through the coaches.

Another special feature of great interest to the traveller in the Pullman cars is their thorough construction and immense strength. In all the accidents that have occurred to trains upon which were one or more of these cars, they were the least damaged of any in the line; no further injury to any one has been known than the breaking of the plate-glass or the end platforms. Such an event as the 'telescoping' of a Pullman coach, a result so common in accidents to the ordinary passenger-cars, is unknown in American railroad history. It is thus seen that passengers have increased protection by day, and in the helplessness of sleep can rest with almost entire assurance of safety.

It was intended by Mr Pullman that the facilities of the train, in attendance, living, safety, and enjoyment should be such as that passengers need not step off the same while *en route*, unless they chose; and such an impression has been made upon the public mind by the thorough system and accountability upon which all matters are conducted, as the result of his inventive genius and good management, that it is an everyday occurrence for ladies, and even children, to go on alone from the Atlantic to the Pacific on this line.

How is this all managed and paid for? After many years of labour and experiment, Mr Pullman formed, in August 1867, a stock Company called The Pullman Palace Car Company, of which he is president, and which now has a working capital of six million dollars. The headquarters of this Company are in Chicago; where, upon Michigan Avenue, fronting Dearborn Park, are the offices of the president, secretary, superintendents, &c., with the dépôt of supplies, in which are constantly kept on hand a stock of fifty thousand dollars' worth of every description of article that goes into the construction of a car, or for its provision department. This office is connected by telegraph with every line of railroad over which the Company's cars run, now numbering more than forty roads; and the conductors of all these different lines report daily at headquarters. Here also are the rooms of the draughtsmen, who are constantly occupied in planning new improvements and perfections. The cars of the Company are built at some half-a-dozen shops in various sections of the country; but it is intended soon, for convenience, to have them all removed to one immense factory. There are now owned and being run by the Company three hundred of these coaches, and the number is constantly increasing. Their method of operation is by contract between the Pullman Company and the railroad on which they run, which, in brief, is as follows.

The Company furnish to the railroad these elegant cars, equipped to the minutest detail, sufficient in number to fully meet the requirements of passengers desiring sleeping accommodations; but do not surrender their ownership of the same. The railroad Company haul these cars; keep the body and running gear in good order, giving them supervision, and collecting their usual rates of fare; and are not in any sense relieved of responsibility for their order and safety, but are

saved the expense of providing sleeping-cars for their roads.

The Pullman Company get their compensation by selling berths to the passengers who desire sleeping accommodations, and furnish their own superintendents and employés to take charge of the same.

A trip of three months' time, in a great measure by land, will now take the passenger, without retracing his steps, from England round the world! We give the programme: By one of the ocean steamers to New York, in ten days; from thence by the Pullman line, *via* Chicago, and the Union and Central Pacific roads, we reach San Francisco in less than seven days' running time. The finest ocean steamers in the world, each one of some 4000 or 5000 tons, are there awaiting the traveller, to take him in twenty-one days to Yokohama (the voyage may be made in eighteen), and thence in six days more to any part of China. From Hong-kong to Calcutta it is fourteen days, by several lines of steamers, which touch at Singapore, Ceylon, Madras, or ports on the coast of Burmah. Or, if one prefers, he can go from Singapore to Bangkok, in Siam, and cross the narrow isthmus to Burmah and Calcutta. From the latter place there is now a railroad completed far up into the north of India, on the borders of Cashmere and Afghanistan, 150 miles above Delhi, running through nearly all the great cities of Northern India, Benares, Allahabad, &c., provided with luxurious cars and all the appliances and comforts for travel which any country can afford. Another road intersects at Allahabad, 626 miles above Calcutta, running south-west some 600 miles to Bombay, where it connects with the overland route to and from Egypt, in twelve or thirteen days by steamer and rail from Bombay to Cairo. From Cairo one can reach almost any port in Europe on the Mediterranean, or in England, in from three to five days—making the actual travelling time around the world only 78 days. All this is accomplished by first-class steamers and railroads, with the exception of 100 miles of *dol-geri* travel in India, which is to be superseded by the iron rail. There will then be an unbroken route of travel, directly around the world, by the most luxurious modes of conveyance known, so that one can travel the entire distance almost as comfortably as he can stay at home.

GWENDOLINE'S HARVEST.

CHAPTER XXV.—MISS FERRIER'S DAVID.

CONTRARY to her own expectations, and in excess of her hope, Gwendoline was fully equal to the occasion. She did not, indeed, venture to meet Piers Mostyn's glance, as, after roving from face to face down the long line of table-guests, it settled, with a gleam of rapturous delight (for her beauty, which had increased rather than diminished, fairly took him by storm), upon her own; but she maintained a calm demeanour; and when Miss Ferrier whispered: 'Who is it, Gwendoline? He seems to know us, and is coming this way,' she answered quietly: 'I do know him slightly. It is Mr Piers Mostyn.'

'What! that brother of Lord Luttrell's that one has heard such shocking things about?'

'Hush! Yes.'

Next moment he was at their side; she introduced him with grave politeness to her sister-in-law, and he took his chair between them. Gwendoline's heart beat so fast, and so loud, that she almost wondered people did not turn round and ask what clock was ticking; but she looked straight before her without moving a muscle, and listened to him with great sedateness. As an old acquaintance, he, in the first place, naturally addressed her rather than her companion; but after a phrase or two of polite sympathy upon her recent bereavement, and an inquiry after Sir Guy's health, he divided his attentions pretty equally between the two ladies. His endeavours were, however, mainly directed to conciliating 'Judy,' and in this he succeeded to admiration.

It is a peculiarity of elderly and pious ladies of all ranks, that while sufficiently severe upon the frailties of the youth of their own sex, they are very merciful to the 'follies' of young men. They persist in looking upon them severally as victims to the wiles of 'designing hussies,' while they pity them individually in direct proportion to their good looks. Again, when these ancient females are of the middle rank, they are wont, notwithstanding their own high standard of morals, to grant considerable latitude to men of good birth and position. 'We must remember,' they say, 'to how many temptations they are exposed' (a remark which they never dream of applying to the 'poor hussies'); and though they do not quite confess as much even to themselves, they have a vague notion that young gentlemen of title have a sort of right divine to misbehave themselves in the matter of gallantry. Perhaps even this very reputation for 'naughtiness' is not without a certain attraction for them, or perhaps it is with the pious wish of converting these exalted young evil-doers; but for whatever reason, certain it is that the class in question do 'cotton' to young rôves of the aristocracy, whenever they get the chance, in a very remarkable manner; and Miss Judith Ferrier was no exception to the rule. It naturally flattered her self-love that this handsome and agreeable young fellow, own brother to a noble lord, should so evidently do his best to make himself pleasant to her, and especially that the beautiful Gwendoline did not (as was but too usual with the cavaliers of the table-d'hôte) exclusively monopolise his attention. His reputation for high play was indeed a much more serious matter in her eyes than his other failings; she 'looked on gamblin' and all sic things as you lose money by' with the abhorrence peculiar to her nation; but, on the other hand, it was sad to think how, concerning the peccadilloes of great people, folks were given to lying; and she charitably hoped that the scandal about him in this matter was grossly exaggerated.

Piers had of course been to Scotland, as a guest in many of the mansions of the north, to which she had been accustomed to look up as to the dwelling of the gods upon Olympus; and he

had also been to Glasgow, which (he said) he admired prodigiously. Before the table-d'hôte was over, in fact, you would have thought—to watch the faces of the two ladies—that it was the ancient spinster rather than the fair widow who was enamoured of the Honourable Piers Mostyn; and it was positively upon her invitation, and not upon Gwendoline's, that he subsequently partook of coffee in their own apartment.

Absence may possibly make some hearts grow fonder, but we are much inclined to question that being its general effect, and, at all events, such was not the case with Piers. He had not forgotten Gwendoline, of course; but when separated from her, he had solaced himself with the charms of others, and could have undoubtedly lived without her very comfortably—if he had possessed the means—to his life's end. He had an idea, too, that all this trouble and bother about 'old Ferrier's' death would have had its effect upon her appearance; that widow's weeds would not have become her; and that altogether she would have 'fallen off' in her looks. But now that he had found her more beautiful than ever, he was once more at her feet, not, indeed, in the sense of being fascinated, or a captive, but as a willing and even eager lover. He was agreeably surprised and greatly pleased with Gwendoline, just as one is wont to value a possession about which one has been suspicious, but which turns out to be quite a bargain. The alternation of passion and cynicism in her moods was to his liking (for he had long lost all taste for simplicity in women), and instead of having (as he had apprehended) to feign his raptures, he almost fell in love with her for the second time.

On the first occasion when they met alone, their greeting was, in fact, equally warm on both sides. 'What a happy moment is this!' cried he, embracing her; 'there is nothing for us to fear now; all obstacles are surmounted, and that so soon and easily.'

The assent was long in coming, but it came at last. 'Yes, dearest.'

Judy, who had grown audacious with respect to Swiss *entrées*, and in the praiseworthy attempt to get her money's worth out of the table-d'hôte on the previous day, had eaten more freely than was good for her, was fortunately confined to her own room; so the two lovers were left to themselves. They had not been alone together since the night of their parting at Bedivere Court; and the incidents of that occasion naturally occurred to them. He reminded her, smiling, of how she had then said that there was one thing the test of which not even her love could have stood, namely, poverty, and inquired was she of the same opinion still.

'Yes, Piers,' said she firmly. 'Are not you?'

'Well, yes,' said he. 'Of course, I did not like your marrying old Ferrier, though I felt you were right all along. But that's all over now, my dear; and we shall be extremely jolly. We have got a great prize, and, upon the whole, we have not paid a great price for it.'

She was silent, and scarce dared to offer him her cheek to kiss, in lieu of answer, lest he should notice how deadly cold it was. Notwithstanding that his arm was wound lovingly about her, her blood seemed to stagnate. ‘Not a great price. Good God!’ She used this ejaculation quite mechanically; yet it sent chill through her anew. Suppose there was a good God after all? ‘Not a great price. If this man only knew what the price had been!’

‘I like your friend Mr Mostyn,’ said Miss Ferrier frankly, as she and Gwendoline sat together over their breakfast a few days afterwards.

‘My friend!—nay, I should rather say *your* friend,’ replied her sister-in-law archly. ‘I am sure he pays much more attention to you than he does to me. You will get quite talked about, you two!’

The idea of being ‘talked about’ in connection with the Honourable Piers Mostyn was rather agreeable to Miss Judith; and not by any means merely ludicrous, as it appeared to Gwendoline. She patted the young widow’s hand reprovingly, and said: ‘O fie!’

But Gwendoline had a reason of her own for keeping the conversation to this channel. The period had now arrived when Miss Ferrier’s moral support was become more than ever necessary to her, and she was determined to obtain it on the first opportunity. When she and Piers were once married, she could dispense with the old lady’s assistance easily enough, and fully intended to do so; but to gain her consent to that union was of the utmost importance. Who could ever say a word against it, if her late husband’s sister, and only relative, was in its favour? and she did not despair of gaining her good word. ‘Mr Mostyn has been “talked about” enough already,’ continued Gwendoline musingly; ‘I wonder whether he is as black as he is painted?’

‘That I am quite sure he is not,’ said Miss Ferrier positively. ‘There cannot be any very great harm in a young man who goes out of his way so (as he *does*) to make himself agreeable to a person of my years—almost old enough to be his mother.’

It passed through Gwendoline’s mind that, so far as years went, Judith Ferrier might have been Piers Mostyn’s grandmother, without any great violation of the laws of nature; but she did not give expression to that idea. ‘He is certainly very polite,’ said she assentingly; ‘but I have been told by papa, who knows the world very thoroughly, that it is always those men who are most courteous and respectful to our sex in manner and demeanour, that are the most heartless in their near relations with them.’

‘I can never believe that Mr Mostyn is heartless,’ observed Judith softly. There was an unaccustomed pathos in Miss Ferrier’s tone that did not escape her observant companion; and Gwendoline remained silent, to let the other’s feelings have full play.

‘He reminds me—though, again, in some things he is so different,’ sighed her sister-in law, ‘of one that’— She paused, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and shook her head.

‘Of one that is gone?’ suggested Gwendoline sympathetically.

‘Yes, gone from me, though he is not dead, my dear. It is getting to be near half a century ago,

and yet I remember it as if it were yesterday. He was a most respectable young man, and had a very thriving commercial establishment. He did a great deal of business with foreign parts; that was one of the reasons why I was so set against visiting them.’

Miss Judith’s sensibility had invested the bare circumstance that her early suitor had kept an Italian warehouse with this amazing halo; but her present tenderness of reminiscence was perfectly genuine. Half a century ago or so, when she had been by no means an unattractive-looking lassie, she had been wooed by a Glasgow youth, named David Penrose, of whose personal appearance—the photograph of which had never faded from her virgin mind—Piers Mostyn reminded her. They were not probably much alike in other respects; and we may safely say (if there is any confidence to be placed in averages) that David was worth ten of him. But yet he had played poor Judy false; had ‘thrown her over’ (if we may use such a phrase with delicacy), in favour of one Jennie Kerr, who was better dowered than the then portionless Judith. But she had forgiven him that by this time, though she had not forgiven Jennie; and all her memories of that far back spring-tide were kindly and tender. Had that little matter come off more satisfactorily, Judith would have been doubtless a different woman. Our temperaments, as well as our religious convictions, are in a great measure the result of circumstances; and she was not by nature sour, nor had she been born a Calvinist. Her hard features seemed to soften as she spoke of those early days; her harsh voice grew almost musical, her eyes filled with tender tears—the genuine dew of the morning of life.

Gwendoline’s heart was not one that could be touched by such a spectacle; but she thoroughly understood the situation, and hastened at once to profit by it. ‘Dear Miss Ferrier,’ said she, ‘your words affect me more than I can express. I feel for you—believe me—deeply; as, indeed, I have reason to feel; for when I married your poor brother, I—he—he was not the man of my own choice.’

Miss Ferrier laid down the work on which her trembling fingers had affected to be engaged, with a look of unaffected surprise, for in all Mrs Barland’s aspersions against Gwendoline’s character, she had never hinted at this. ‘Why, you don’t say so, my dear; and yet you made Bruce such an excellent wife!

‘I did my best in that respect,’ said Gwendoline simply; ‘but I loved another when I married him. It was not my fault; I obeyed my father. He whom I would have married was as poor as myself, and our engagement papa said was out of the question.’

‘That was just what happened with Davy,’ sighed Miss Ferrier. ‘It was the money did it. He thought Jennie Kerr a better match—though he was wrong even there, as it turned out. But go on, my dear, and tell me about yourself. Is the young man still alive that would have married you?’

‘Yes.’

‘And unmarried?’

‘Yes. It was Piers himself.’

‘What! the Honourable Piers Mostyn!’ exclaimed the astonished Judith—‘the only brother of Lord Luttrell!’

It had instantly occurred to her (as Gwendoline had hoped it would), that although she could not marry Piers herself, it would be a great feather in her social cap to be sister-in-law to the woman who did. 'Why, if that brother of his should die, she, Judith Ferrier, could be almost said to be connected with the peerage itself!' It was anomalous enough that this pious old lady, who so often expressed her satisfaction that she had only a few more years to live among the pomps and vanities of a wicked world, should have derived satisfaction from this consideration; yet it is not only a fact that she did so, but also that she had never been so thoroughly pleased with her future prospects since the day when false young David promised to make her Mrs Penrose. 'Lor, my dear, and what do you mean to do now?' inquired she with extreme interest.

'Well, that is a matter which in due course of time—certainly not to-day, or to-morrow,' returned Gwendoline gravely, 'concerning which I had thought of asking your valuable advice. Since you yourself have touched upon the subject—though I feel there is a delicacy in speaking of it so comparatively soon after your dear brother's death—I will say this much, that if at some future period I could be induced to consider Mr Mostyn's suit with favour, it would be mainly from the reflection that the dear children would have some one else to look to than their step-mother, in yourself. Otherwise, nothing could induce me to think of a second marriage. Though, as to that, I am sure Piers would be a most kind father; for, whatever his shortcomings, he is certainly tender-hearted.'

'He is that, I am sure,' assented Judith rapturously.

'Well, what I had vaguely thought about, dear Miss Ferrier—for all these things are in the future, and but for this unexpected meeting with Mr Mostyn, might never have taken any tangible shape—was this; that in case I was ever induced to marry Piers, that I might intrust dear Marion, with, of course, a suitable provision for her maintenance, to your care. The bracing Scotch air is in a manner native to her, and Dr Gisborne himself once mentioned it as likely to do her good.'

'That would be a capital plan,' said Miss Ferrier eagerly. The old lady was genuinely attached to little Marion, who she averred was 'quite a companion to anybody' by this time. The idea of a liberal allowance per annum for her keep (although, to do her justice, quite a secondary consideration), was also not unpleasing.

'Then supposing, just for the sake of argument,' continued Gwendoline, 'that if some time hence the event of which we have been speaking should be hinted at by Mr Mostyn, I may consider the question without reference to dear Marion?'

'I should like to have the darling child to live with me above all things,' said Miss Ferrier gratefully; and for that time the subject dropped.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE MARRIAGE GIFT.

It is a moot-point, and must ever be so among good people like ourselves, how far wicked folks are able to enjoy themselves; it seems, however, that they do continue to do so in some degree. The professional thief (for instance) has his hours of relaxation, and doubtless of pleasure, when in

company of the (temporary) object of his affection, or over the jovial bowl, he is oblivious to the existence of the police. Conscience has not power at all times, although, perhaps, its sting may return with the more virulence, after such brief intervals of impunity. Thus, the moral support of Miss Ferrier having been secured, Gwendoline gave herself up, if not to happiness, at all events to the hopes of it, and resolutely stifled all misgivings. She lived in the smiles of her lover whenever it was possible; and when alone—and she was never alone in the daytime, for the company of her sister-in-law, or even her step-children, was far preferable to her own—she took her laudanum in increased doses. Piers continued assiduously attentive to 'Judy,' and devoted to herself; and if he had now and then very particular business which took him to Homburg or Baden, he always returned more submissive than ever, and grievously in want of money, with which Gwendoline supplied him without stint.

The whole party remained at Lucerne far into the winter; and when exactly one year had elapsed since Mr Ferrier's death, returned to Paris, where Piers and Gwendoline were married at the British Embassy, Miss Ferrier and the children departing the same day for Glen Druid. Fortune, which would thus seem to have filled Gwendoline's cup to the brim, had still another gift in store for her, which, curiously enough, was presented on her wedding-day. The bride and bridegroom were at dinner when an express messenger arrived from London seeking speech with Mr Mostyn. He left the table, and was for some time absent. Gwendoline grew fidgety and disturbed; was it possible that even now, in that first hour of success, Nemesis was coming upon her? Her secret was safe enough, save in her own nervous imagination; but in that it was never safe. What event, thought she, in England could possibly have happened of such importance as to necessitate a special messenger? Conscience does not reason, or she would have reflected, that if it had had anything to do with her own affairs, the man would not have been sent to Piers. At last her husband returned, wearing some gravity in his face, but more of triumph. 'Gwendoline,' said he, taking her hand, 'my brother has been killed by a fall from his horse. I salute you,' and he kissed her cheek, 'as Lady Luttrell.'

If there was not much fraternal sentiment in his words, there was as much as could be reasonably expected. There had never been 'any love lost,' as the phrase goes, between himself and his brother, and he was not the man to trouble himself to affect a virtue without some solid reasons; but in the ordinary and conventional sense of the term, Piers Mostyn was a gentleman, and good manners, if nothing more, prevented him from evincing any vulgar satisfaction. It was not so, however, with Gwendoline. Relieved from her vague fears, wild with excitement, and for once thrown off her guard, she exclaimed: 'How lucky it was we did not hear of this good news yesterday, or our marriage must needs have been put off!'

The unseemliness of the remark, rather than its calculating selfishness, jarred upon the not oversensitive ear of the new-made lord. 'Yes, that was fortunate,' replied he coolly; 'and there is another pleasant consideration, I come into my kingdom, such as it is; so no one can now say that the luck is *all* upon my side.'

It is not a good augury for the future when folks upon their wedding-day begin to balance their respective advantages and obligations.

THE MONTH:
SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE Council of the Royal Agricultural Society announce that their annual meeting for the present year is to be held during five days at Oxford in July next, and they publish, as usual, a long list of prizes which they will give for the best specimens of various kinds of live-stock, for implements, produce, and other matters connected with agriculture. Any one in want of particulars may get them by applying to the Secretary of the Society at their office in Hanover Square. Educational examinations for young men under twenty-one years of age are to be held in April. The prizes are in value from ten pounds to thirty pounds: the subjects are—the Science and Practice of Agriculture—Mechanics—Chemistry—Book-keeping—Botany and Vegetable Physiology—Geology—Anatomy and Animal Physiology, and Land-surveying. Here is range enough to inspire hopefulness, and to occupy a large amount of mental ability.

The part of the Society's *Journal* just published contains a well-written Report on the Farming of Belgium, which all persons who are interested in agriculture, and especially those who think that a country is prosperous the more it has of small farms, may read with advantage. 'La petite culture,' like some other things, looks best at a distance; but among its operations and contrivances there are some well worthy of imitation, particularly as regards the arrangements for cattle-feeding.

The Report contains some remarks on climate, which we reproduce here as likely to be of use. The mean summer temperature of England is about 61 degrees Fahrenheit: that of Flanders is about 63 degrees: in winter, the reverse is the case, England being 39 degrees, and Flanders 37 degrees. The rainfall of Flanders is 30 inches a year, which is more than in England, and while we have from 150 to 160 rainy days in the year, the Flemings have 190. Flanders has an advantage in the greater amount of summer heat, and in a shorter time of frost than we have; frost being rare in Flanders in October, and equally rare after the middle of April.

Mr Siemens, whose regenerative gas-furnace we noticed some time since, now manufactures steel directly from a mixture of ore and pig-iron; and so saves all the time and cost of converting iron into steel by the ordinary process. The steel produced by the new method is of different qualities, some being so tough as to bear any amount of bending without breaking. At a meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute, held at Middlesborough, it was stated that further improvements may be expected. The chemistry of iron is not yet fully known;

but with increased knowledge there is good reason for believing that steel for railway bars will be manufactured at a cost but little more than of that known to the trade as 'puddled bar.'

Astronomers are holding preliminary discussions about the eclipse of the sun which is to take place next December; and the *Nautical Almanac* office has published a chart shewing 'the path of the total phase.' This stretches from Turkey across Sicily to Northern Africa, whence it sweeps over the south of Spain, and passes to the Atlantic. So much depends now on observation of eclipses, that it is easy to foresee that pleasant parties will be formed to spend a week or two in the warm sunshine of Algiers when days are short, gloomy, and cold in our latitudes. Another topic much talked of by astronomers is the transit of Venus of 1874, and the best modes of observing it. Suggestions are made that as photography has rendered such good service in eclipses, it may perhaps achieve yet greater results for the transit.

The Society of Arts are occupying themselves with a diversity of questions in the hope of arriving at a practical solution by discussion. Education is one of their standing subjects; emigration gives them something very serious to think about; they are trying to find the best way of utilising the sewage of towns—of laying down tramways in streets—and of increasing the revenue of railways by a reduction of fares. Besides all this, they have had an exhibition of decorative art, and are promoting the question of a tunnel under the Channel from Dover to Calais. This is an important and interesting bill of fare, and we hope its discussion will lead to beneficial results.

The Royal Institute of British Architects have had before them specimens of an improved kind of terra cotta, manufactured at Charlottenburg, near Berlin. Some of the specimens had the appearance of white biscuit, producing an excellent effect in medallions, capitals, and enriched mouldings: others were in various tints of red and cream colour. The Institute have voted a sum of money towards the establishment of Architectural Art Classes, where young men are to be trained in the true principles of architecture.

At a recent meeting of the Entomological Society it was mentioned that numerous specimens of a species of locust were captured last autumn in different parts of England; and, as an example of the height to which insects fly in the air, a hailstone was once picked up in which an insect (*Chlorrops lineata*) was enclosed. The insect must consequently have been flying at a great height to be caught by the hailstone in the very moment of its congelation. In his annual address to the Society, the president stated that the number of species of lepidopterous insects existing throughout the world may be reckoned as 227,240. A prodigious number, truly! He also mentioned that recent researches have led to a rejection of the notion that flies walk on a ceiling by a sucker-like action of the pads of their feet, or by a mechanical grasp of small roughnesses. It now appears that it is by means of a viscous secretion that flies can walk in the inverted position. This is established as a scientific fact: the viscous matter is forced from each extremity of the hairs by pressure; and the mechanical contrivance by which the fly is enabled

to overcome the adhesiveness and lift its feet is described as admirable.—The Society talk of offering prizes for essays on Economical or Structural Entomology.

Some readers know that *esparto*, or Spanish grass, has been largely used of late years by paper-makers. Ships sailing with coals from the Tyne to Spain have brought back cargoes of the grass, which always commanded a ready sale. Recently, however, the supply has fallen off; a state of things which seems to add importance to an announcement just made by the government of India—namely, that they are ready to give £5000 to the inventor of the best machine for dressing the *Rheea* plant, which grows abundantly in India, and is known as China grass, or China nettle. By dressing is meant the separation of the fibre from the bark and stem. After the American cotton-gin, which cleans cotton so admirably, and after the ingenious flax-breaking machines now in use, it ought to be easy to invent a machine to do what is required by the authorities in Bengal. An abundant supply of *Rheea* fibre, at a reasonable price, would benefit our spinners and weavers as well as the paper-makers. Inventors desirous to compete should address themselves to the Secretary of the Home Department at Calcutta.

At the soirée given by Sir Edward Sabine, President of the Royal Society, there was exhibited a model in plaster of the region of Mount Sinai, executed from the recent Ordnance Survey of that portion of Arabia. With that model before him, a student of Biblical history would be able to identify positions and trace routes. It forms a valuable companion to the model of Jerusalem, of which we gave some account a twelvemonth ago. Other models or maps may be expected to follow, for two competent explorers are now travelling in the Desert country between Sinai and the Holy Land to discover, if possible, any traces which may have been left by the Israelites in their wanderings.

Connected with this subject, an important scrap of news has come from the ancient land of Moab. An inscribed stone was found almost in the heart of that once warlike kingdom, on which Mesha, a monarch whose name appears in the Book of Kings, has recorded some of his exploits. There are also names of places which occur in Scripture, and these being identified, facilitate the work of translation. The character of the writing is that known to oriental scholars as Phoenician. It is very unfortunate that as soon as the Arabs heard that inquiries were made concerning the stone, they broke it up, and hid the pieces in their granaries. These have, however, been recovered by Captain Warren of the Survey, and one of the functionaries of the French consulate; so that we may hope the whole will some day be seen in Paris or London. In its complete state, the stone appears to have been 3 feet 5 inches high, and 1 foot 9 inches wide. Tracings of the largest pieces are now in the hands of Mr Deutsch of the Museum, and others are expected. When once he shall have the whole before him, he will scarcely fail, he states, to shew that whether as regards palaeography, ancient geography, or Biblical history, this venerable Moabish stone is one of the most important ancient records ever yet discovered. Its date is supposed to be about 850 years B.C.

We may mention here, in connection with the

Holy Land, that an English lady, taking into consideration the imperfect water-supply of Jerusalem, offered to defray the cost of laying down a proper supply (more than £20,000). But the Turkish government, fearing disturbance of the ground, and perhaps the influence of the foreigner, declined the offer.

SPRING.

Come back, O Spring of Earth!

Come back, thou long-lost Spring!
We long for the light of love and mirth

That airs of April bring;

We long for the soft moss-rose,
For a fresh green on the leaves,
For the sunny bank where the daffodil blows,
And the swallow in the eaves;

We are tired of the Winter's gloom,
Of the snow-flake cold and pale;

And we long for the orchard's crown of bloom,

And the song of the nightingale.

Come back, O Spring of Youth!

Come back to the hoary head;
We long for the light of joy and truth,

And the hopes that are long since dead;

We long for the brooding wings
Of those blue eternal skies

That gilded the dullest and meanest things
With the glory of Paradise.

We are tired of the ceaseless beat

Of waves on a weary shore,

Of the clash of tongues and the tramp of feet,
And the heart too dull to soar;

And we long (in vain) for the sunlight sweet

That is vanished for evermore.

Come back, O Spring of Love!

Come back to the heart grown cold;
We long for the moon in the elm-tree grove,

And the autumn's noon of gold;

We long for the evening hours

When the rooks had gone to rest,

And from myrtle scent of garden bowers

We gazed at the crimson West.

We long for one hour to borrow

The heart of deep content,

The light of a time when all our sorrow

Was an hour in absence spent;

We are tired of a loveless strife

With toil, and sin, and care;

And we long for the light of a nobler life,

And the loving heart that's there.

Come back, O Spring of Heaven!

Come back to a world forlorn;

We long for the twilight of earth's sad even

To melt in a golden morn;

We long for the mists to rise

That hang o'er the good and true,

To see once more, through opening skies,

The eternal stainless blue;

And to walk by the palms of Paradise,

Where Heaven and Earth are new.

We are tired of the dreary gloom

Of earth and earthly things,

And we long for the soul's immortal bloom,

Where joy and love are her rich perfume,

And 'Glory' the song she sings.